

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

Claims 13-18 and 21-34 are pending. Claims 1-12 and 19-20 have been cancelled without prejudice. Claims 21-34 are new.

Claim Rejection - 35 U.S.C. 102

Claims 13-18 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Heitmann.

Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Claim 13 has been amended to remove unnecessary text and to replace "two or more" with "a plurality of". None of these changes alters the scope of claim 13 and none of these changes is made to distinguish over Heitmann.

Claim 13 requires:

13. (Currently Amended) A procedure for transferring heat between a plurality of two or more stations of a system for manufacturing tobacco products, comprising the steps of:

cooling a manufacturing station by circulating at least one heat exchange fluid procured from a source located externally of the station;

directing the heat exchange fluid from the cooled manufacturing station to a station for the primary processing of at least one raw forming material, in order to heat the primary processing station.

Heitmann fails to disclose or suggest "directing the heat exchange fluid from the cooled manufacturing station to a station for the primary processing of at least one raw forming material, to heat the primary processing station". Rather, Heitmann discloses only that heat exchange fluid is directed from a cooled manufacturing station 1 to a heat exchanger

11. As disclosed at column 5 lines 56-60 of Heitmann, the second portion cooling system 5 comprises a heat exchanger 11 wherein the fluid entering in the direction of arrow 13 exchanges heat with a second fluid, and a second fluid is recooled in the part 12 of the second portion of the cooling system.

Nowhere does Heitmann disclose or suggest that any part of the cooling system 5 is “a station for the primary processing of at least one raw forming material” or that the heat exchange fluid is used “to heat the primary processing station”, as required in claim 13. Heitmann is simply silent on the primary processing of at least one forming material. The process of claim 13, on the other hand, results in a more efficient and reduced cost process for manufacturing tobacco products by utilizing the waste heat from cooling the manufacturing machines to heat the station for primary processing of the raw forming material. See the specification at paragraph [0039]:

[0039] In addition, when equipped with the heat exchange device 19 described in the foregoing specification, the system 1 is able to cool the machines and/or devices 4 of the manufacturing station 3 without using complex and costly chilling equipment, and to heat the primary processing station 2, keeping the internal temperature at a constant value without the use of special heating equipment. Dispensing with chilling and heating equipment has the effect of lowering overall production costs significantly, and this in turn appreciably reduces the cost of marketing the finished products.

Therefore, independent claim 13 is not anticipated or rendered obvious by Heitmann and it is respectfully requested that the pending rejection of claim 13 be withdrawn.

Claims 14-18 depend from claim 13 and are believed allowable for the same reasons as given above with respect to claim 13, as well as for the further limitations contained therein.

New claims 21-34 restore dependencies found in original claims 16-18 prior to the preliminary amendment. These new claims depend from claim 13 and are allowable for the same reasons as given above with respect to claim 13, as well as for the further limitations contained therein.

Conclusion

All matters having been addressed above and in view of the pending claims and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests the entry of this Amendment, the Examiner's

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reconsideration of the application, and the timely allowance of the pending claims. Applicants' counsel remains ready to assist the Examiner in any way to facilitate and expedite the prosecution of this application.

Respectfully submitted,

Timothy J. Klima
Reg. No.: 34,852

Harbin Klima Law Group PLLC
500 Ninth Street SE
Washington, DC 20003
Ph: 202-543-6404
Fax: 202-543-6406